




**MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

DATE: January 27, 2006

TO: George Burgess, County Manager

FROM: 
Carlos Alvarez, Mayor
Miami-Dade County

SUBJECT: Short and Long Term Options for solving
Miami-Dade County's water supply crisis

After recent meetings with the South Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and County staff, I was disturbed to learn of the level which Miami-Dade County's water crisis had reached. According to the South Florida Water Management District, Miami-Dade County currently consumes approximately 346 million gallons of water per day, of which only about 5% is reused. The current water use permit granted to Miami-Dade allows for up to 413 million gallons per day, but given the projected levels of growth we will need to draw upon ever greater amounts of water. It is both unrealistic and irresponsible to continue to draw from the Biscayne Bay aquifer and the Florida Everglades.

Although an application to expand our water use permit to 450 million gallons per day was submitted by the County in 2004, that application is still pending. Recent communications with the State indicate that unless actions are taken to curb consumption and increase reuse, the permit will meet stiff resistance.

Given the inevitability of Miami-Dade County's growth and the need for water that will accompany it, a feasible plan for properly dealing with this situation is urgently needed. Immediate actions must be taken to develop viable options for the county to confront this challenge. I am aware of the heavy financial impact that this project will entail, however short and long term options must be explored at once. I look forward to seeing your findings and working to properly address this critical situation.

c: Honorable Chairman Joe A. Martinez and Members,
Board of County Commissioners
Honorable Harvey Ruvlin, Clerk of the Courts
South Florida Water Management District
Murray A. Greenberg, County Attorney
Kay Sullivan, Director, Clerk of the Board